

Why is Geography important?

Geography provokes and answers questions about the natural and human worlds, using different scales of enquiry to view them from different perspectives. It develops knowledge of places and environments throughout the world, an understanding of maps, and a range of investigative and problem solving skills both inside and outside the classroom. As such, it prepares pupils for adult life and employment. Geography is a focus within the curriculum for understanding and resolving issues about the environment and sustainable development. It is also an important link between the natural and social sciences.



Summary of the Department

The Geography Department at William Howard School aims to develop the interest and further the knowledge of all pupils in their appreciation of the earth's landscapes, people and environments.

The department has six teaching staff and is led by Ms Boyes. All members of the teaching staff are geography specialists with a wide range of interests and experience.

The teaching of the A level geography course is shared between Ms Boyes and Miss Linford. GCSE geography is taught by a core group of staff, and the responsibility for geography in years 7, 8 and 9 lies with Mr Mcpartlan, Mr Metcalfe, Miss Linford, Mrs Magson, Miss Dixon and Mrs Forster. The department is supported by Mrs Giecco, teaching assistant.

How does it link to the local community?

Throughout the key stages our pupils study a wide range of current events and geographical issues, many of which will link in with the local area. We seek to stimulate pupils' interest and curiosity by encouraging them to think for themselves and develop their own opinions. Topical issues include fair trade, sustainable living, tourism and links with other countries such as Tanzania.

Key Stage 3

Students currently study the following themes although there is a degree of flexibility so that we can adapt teaching to study topical events:

Teaching in Year 7 begins with 'Mapskills', and is followed by Its your planet, All about the UK and Rivers. The teaching of geography in Years 8 covers China, Energy, Tourism and Weather and Climate. Students start the AQA GCSE in Year 9 after studying a unit on Africa. The GCSE topics cover Tectonic Hazards, Tropical Storms, Extreme weather in the UK and Climate Change. There is a fieldtrip to Keswick at the end of this year.

Key Stage 4

Students in years 10 and 11 currently follow the AQA specification.

The specification consists of four themes examined in three papers:

- Theme 1: Living with the Physical Environment
- Theme 2: Challenges in the Human Environment
- Theme 3: Geographical Applications
- Theme 4: Geographical Skills

Students sit three exams at the end of year 11:

- Paper 1 – Living with the Physical Environment: 1 hour 30 minutes long, 35%.
 - Paper 2 – Challenges in the Human Environment: 1 hour 30 minutes long, 35%.
 - Paper 3 – Geographical Applications which includes Issue evaluation, Fieldwork, and Geographical skills: 1 hour 15 minutes, 30%.
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Key Stage 5

Students in years 12 and 13 follow the AQA A level Geography course. Currently the AS exams are sat towards the end of year 12, and the A2 exams are taken at the end of year 13.

AS:

- Paper 1: *Physical geography and people and the environment*: Water and carbon cycles **or** Coastal systems and landscapes. Contemporary urban environments. 1 hour 30 minutes: 50%
- Paper 2: *Human geography and geography fieldwork investigation*: Changing places, Geography fieldwork investigation and geographical skills 1 hour 30 minutes: 50%

A2:

- Paper 1: *Physical Geography*: Water and carbon cycles, Coastal systems and landscapes **or** Glacial systems and landscapes, Hazards: 2 hours 30 minutes 40%
 - Paper 2: *Human Geography*: Global systems and global governance, Changing places, Contemporary urban environments **or** Population and the environment: 2 hours 30 minutes. 40%
 - Paper 3: *The Geographical investigation* is weighted at 60 marks = 20%.
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Learning Outside of the Classroom

Fieldwork is an essential part of geography, all GCSE student will carry out two planned days of fieldwork. One will be in year 10 and one in year 11. Recent fieldwork has involved studying the impact of urban regeneration in Salford Quays and studying coastal processes along the Cumbrian coast.

AS students are involved in a day of local urban fieldwork in Carlisle in the autumn term and carry out a day of drainage basin investigations in the Lake District in the spring term. All students have the chance to take part in a week of fieldwork in the Lake District at the end of the summer term, and plan and conduct their own field studies in the local area during the summer break.